NOTES

"BIRTHDAY" WAS ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN TWO PARTS IN THE FEB 2000 ISSUE OF JUNE MAGAZINE. IT WAS MADE AVAILABLE IN COLLECTED FORM FOR THE FIRST TIME FROM CHARA'S 5 YEARS LATER, COUPLED WITH "DOKUSAISHA GRANADA".

Birthday 前編

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YAMA-GUCHI FROM PHYS-ICS...

AND THEN

AND THEN AFTER THREE HOURS HE PASSED OUT!

KOYA MAA?

HEY KOYAMA, GIMME A WIN-STON----

GYA HAH AHA HAA

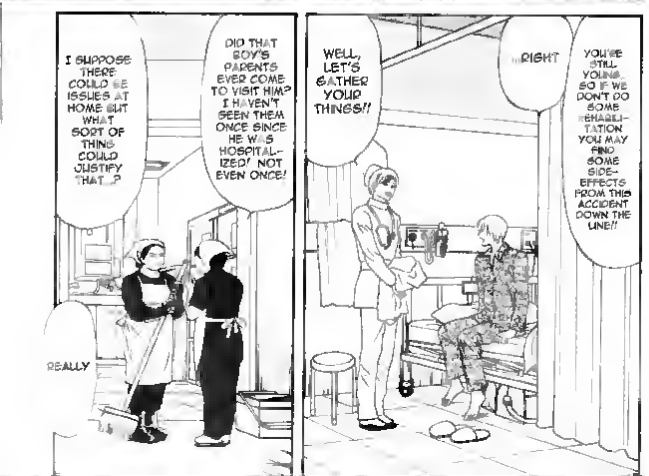
WHAT THE HELL...

KOYA MA?

OH, THIS IS BAD...

dos

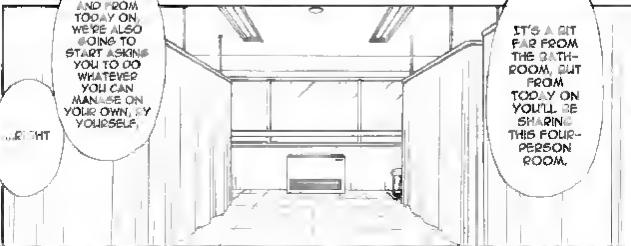
.....
KOYAMA-SAN, TODAY WE'RE GOING TO MOVE YOU FROM RECOVERY INTO THE MAIN WARD


I SUPPOSE THERE COULD BE ISSUES AT HOME BUT WHAT SORT OF THING COULD JUSTIFY THAT...?
DID THAT BOY'S PARENTS EVER COME TO VISIT HIM? I HAVEN'T SEEN THEM ONCE SINCE HE WAS HOSPITALIZED! NOT EVEN ONCE!
REALLY
WELL, LET'S GATHER YOUR THINGS!!
...RIGHT
YOU'RE STILL YOUNG, SO IF WE DON'T DO SOME REHABILITATION YOU MAY FIND SOME SIDE-EFFECTS FROM THIS ACCIDENT DOWN THE LINE!!

...RIGHT
YOU'RE DOING GREAT!! ONE STEP AT A TIME

MAKOTO!! WE'LL BE RIGHT BACK TO VISIT AGAIN TOMOR-ROW
YEP
DO YOU HAVE ANY MORE LAUNDRY? THIS IS IT?
YEP, THAT'S ALL.

KEH
SO THAT'S THE LITTLE PRINCE WITH THE PRIVATE ROOM


...RIGHT
AND FROM TODAY ON, WE'RE ALSO GOING TO START ASKING YOU TO DO WHATEVER YOU CAN MANAGE ON YOUR OWN, BY YOURSELF.
IT'S A BIT FAR FROM THE BATH-ROOM, BUT FROM TODAY ON YOU'LL BE SHARING THIS FOUR-PERSON ROOM.

I'M HERE TO VISIT, GRAND-PA

OH, HEY

DID YOU GET ANY SLEEP? I BROUGHT YOU SOME FLOWERS.

HEY, I BROUGHT YOU A NEW MAGAZINE

I BROUGHT YOU SOME OOLONG TEA TOO!

GRAND-MA, IT'S TIME TO TAKE YOUR TEMPERATURE

I DON'T WANT TO LISTEN TO MY WALKMAN OR WATCH TV

DON'T WANT TO DO ANYTHING--

I GUESS SAKADA AND INOUE BOTH HAVE TESTS RIGHT ABOUT NOW

WONDER WHEN I'LL BE ABLE TO GET OUT OF HERE? AND WHAT'LL HAPPEN THEN I WONDER.

A

AH

BUT BEYOND THAT, THE TIME STRETCHES ON FOREVER
IN BETWEEN SPLIRTS OF TESTS EXAMINATIONS REHABILITATION
EVERY DAY AT THE HOSPITAL IS THE SAME. EVERY DAY WE'RE UP AT 6 IN THE MORNING. AT SEVEN, BREAKFAST NOON, LUNCH NINE, LIGHTS OUT
AAH
BUMP
HEY!! BASTARD!! APOLOGIZE!!
IT'S NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS! AND IT WASN'T MY FAULT!
WHAT THE HELL, THE LITTLE PRINCE, HUH?!
KURO-CHAN...
HOW'D YOU LIKE IT IF THIS WAS YOUR DINNER?!

YOUNG PEOPLE LIKE YOU MAKE ME LAUGH!

IDIOT. WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT ME ANYWAY?!

DON'T BUMP OTHER PEOPLE !!

BULLIES LIKE YOU ARE A DIME A DOZEN THESE DAYS---AREN'T THEY!!

NO IT'S NOT, AUNTIE.

IT'S OKAY, KURO...

KIDS LIKE THIS ARE SPOILED AND RUDE, THEY'LL NEVER LAST IN THE WORLD IF THEY'DE NOT HELD ACCOUNTABLE

APOLOGIZE!!

SNI

CK

KOYA MA-SAN!

TAKA SHI!!

WHAT DID I TELL YA! HE'S A PUNK!!

KURO-SAWA-SAN!!

WHAT ON EARTH ARE YOU DOING?!

MOM!

I'LL GET A SUPER-VISOR!!

IS THIS A HOSPITAL OR AN OLD-FOLKS-HOME? WITH SO MANY OLD PEOPLE AROUND, YOU'LL HAVE TO WATCH OUT FOR ONES WHO CAN'T SEE YOU WELL.

THEN IT WAS THE FAULT OF THE WOMAN WHO WASN'T PAYING ATTENTION

THE HEAD NURSE FILED A COMPLAINT, BUT IF IT'S LIKE YOU SAID

I DON'T KNOW WHY JUST TALKING TO MY MOM IRRI-TATED ME SO MUCH, BUT...

A-ALRIGHT, IF YOU SAY SO.... AT LEAST CALL ME, WILL YOU?

THE RE-GISTERS AT THE SUPER-MARKET ARE BUSY, RIGHT? I TOLD YOU THAT YOU DIDN'T NEED TO SKIP WORK TO VISIT ME HERE!!

EH?

DON'T VISIT ME

SOME-HOW, JUST TALKING TO PEOPLE THAT MUCH MAKES ME TIRED...

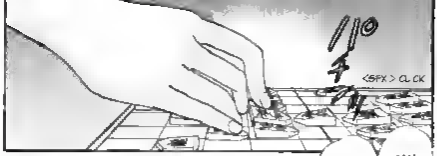
BUT IF SHE COMES HERE I'LL END UP FEELING LIKE I OWE HER SOME-THING AND DAD'LL GET PISSED OFF.

I DIDN'T SAY ANY-THING. I WAS REALLY THINKING.

HE CAN'T HAVE BEEN SERIOUS.

"DON'T BUMP OTHER PEOPLE!"

BULLIES LIKE YOU ARE A DIME A DOZEN THESE DAYS, AREN'T THEY!!!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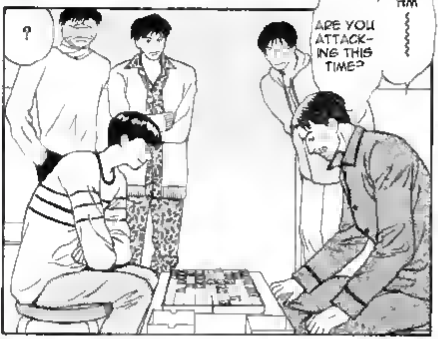
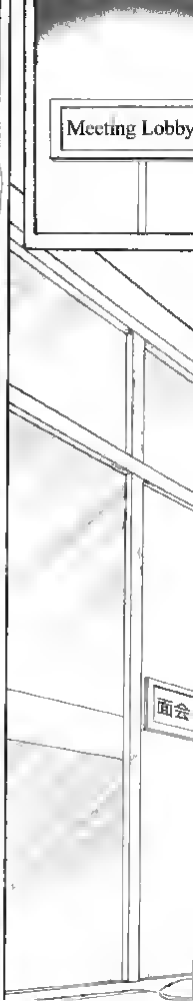

?
ARE YOU ATTACK-ING THIS TIME?
HM

HEY


Meeting Lobby
面会

I'M KIND OF VIOLENT AND HAVE TROUBLE HOLDING MY MOUTH WHEN CONFRONTING PEOPLE

UM WELL, I GUESS

HEY, KURO-CHAN

WHY DID YOU TALK TO ME LIKE THAT YESTERDAY?

UM

HO HOU

YOU SHOULD APOLOGIZE

HEY WHO'S NEXT?

BUT EITHER WAY

BUT SINCE YOU RESPONDED TO WHAT I SAID THAT WAY, I WON, DIDN'T I?

PLAY NICE, KURO-CHAN

CHECK
CLICK
OOOOOOH
clap clap clap
I'M THE KING OF THE LOBBY!!
I WIN!!

IF HE HADN'T GOTTEN SICK, HE'D MOST LIKELY HAVE GONE TO A REALLY GOOD PRIVATE SCHOOL WITH A CUSHY ESCALATOR SYSTEM.

HE'S MY AGE, AND IN HIS 2ND YEAR OF HIGH SCHOOL

OH MY, YOU WERE HOSPITALIZED AFTER AN ACCIDENT? YOU POOR THING

FROM NOW ON YOU SHOULD CALL ME "KURO-SAWA-SAN"

EEH

BUSINESS IS GOOD TODAY, SO I GUESS I'LL LET YOU OFF THE HOOK THIS TIME, BOY!!

HIS NAME IS KURO-SAWA MAKOTO

WHAT THE HELL'S HIS PROBLEM? HOW OLD DOES THIS KID THINK HE IS?

I'M SO GLAD THAT MAKOTO WAS ABLE TO MAKE FRIENDS WITH SOMEONE HIS OWN AGE HERE. IT'S RARE FOR HIM IT'S A PLEASURE TO MEET YOU

LIKEWISE

UH HI

THIS IS KOYAMA TAKASHI-KUN

WE'RE REALLY FROM TOTALLY DIFFERENT WORLDS....

NO, NEVER

MUNHEIN'S?

HAVE YOU EVER HEARD OF THE STEINER EFFECT"?

HIS SUPER-NICE PARENTS ARE BOTH FAMOUS ADVOCATES OF FREE EDUCATION AND SENT HIM TO STUDY ABROAD IN GERMANY FOR ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL.

(TN) REFERENCE TO STEINER EDUCATION, AN EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY THAT PLACES A STRONG EMPHASIS ON BALANCING THE CHILD'S NATURAL STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT WITH CREATIVITY AND ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE WITH STRONG EMPHASIS ON THE ARTS, SOCIAL SKILLS AND SPIRITUAL VALUES

HE'S NOTHING LIKE THE SORT OF FRIEND I'D HAVE GONE OUT AND MADE UNDER NORMAL CIRCUMSTANCES

THAT'S THE DEPARTMENT STORE AND THE MOVIE THEATRE...

AND THERE'S THE ZOO I WENT TO WHEN I WAS JUST A BRAT

THAT PENTHOUSE OVER THERE'S MY HOUSE

THERE'S A REALLY DELICIOUS RAMEN SHOP CLOSE BY; WHEN WE GET OUT, WE SHOULD GO TOGETHER SOME TIME!!

BY THE WAY WHY ARE YOU IN HERE?

LIVER DISEASE —

BUT THAT'S SOMETHING ONLY OLD MEN GET ISN'T IT?

WELL SORRY!!

DID YOU KNOW THAT A LOT OF THE OLD PEOPLE HERE WANT TO COMMIT SUICIDE BECAUSE THEIR FAMILIES HAVE GIVEN UP ON THEM?

EEH?

IF YOU SAY SOMETHING LIKE THAT YOU'LL JUST GET REALLY SAD AND YOU'LL STRESS OUT EVEN MORE

OH COME ON, YOUR FAMILY SAID THEY WERE REALLY BUSY, DIDN'T THEY?

AT MY AGE, THEY PROBABLY THINK IT WOULD BE BETTER FOR ME TO JUST DIE AND HAVE IT OVER WITH

PSST, KURO

IT DOESN'T MATTER. MY DAUGHTER DOESN'T EVEN COME TO VISIT ME ANYMORE

---I GUESS IT IS

YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING, DO YOU?

IT'S REALLY KIND OF AMAZING THE DIFFERENCE JUST HAVING SOMEONE BESIDE YOU IN HARD TIMES CAN MAKE. ISN'T IT?

HOHO

I KNOW YOU'RE A PAIN IN THE ASS!!

HE ALWAYS KNEW SO MUCH MORE THAN I DID
I'VE READ ALL THESE
THIS ONE'S A BOOK ON THE ABORIGINAL TRIBES OF AUSTRALIA
AND A JACKSON POLLAK ARTBOOK THIS ONE'S PRETTY COOL
THIS ONE OVER HERE'S A MANUAL ON MOVIE DIRECTING
I BET YOU NEVER COULD'VE READ THIS MANY BOOKS HUH?
文書室

ARE YOU MAKING FUN OF ME?
NO I MEANT BECAUSE YOU WEREN'T SICK LIKE ME
WHEN YOU'RE YOUNG THERE'S PLENTY OF FUN TO BE HAD JUST LIVING NORMALLY

THAT'S NOT NECESSARILY TRUE
I'M HERE BECAUSE OF WHAT EVERYONE CALLS AN ACCIDENT, BUT
I THINK YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO CALL IT A SUICIDE ATTEMPT

HEEEH?

MY PARENTS... THEY SEPARATED AND MY LIFE SORT OF SCATTERED

A LONG TIME AGO MY LITTLE SISTER DIED WHEN A CAR HIT HER IN THE ROAD ON HER WAY HOME. THE DRIVER WASN'T WATCHING THE ROAD...

I'VE NEVER TRAVELLED ANYWHERE OR MADE ANY SORT OF HAPPY MEMORIES WITH MY FAMILY

I WAS TIRED OF GOING HOME SO I'D STAY WITH MY FRIENDS OR JUST HANG OUT ALL NIGHT IN FRONT OF CONVENIENCE STORES.

BUT I HAD NO AMBITION

WHEN I RAN OUT OF MONEY, I JUST SHOPLIFTED...

I WAS WALKING ALONG THE EDGE OF AN APARTMENT BUILDING ROOF FOR THE HELL OF IT

IF I TOOK JUST ONE STEP

I COULD GO TO SOME OTHER PLACE... I COULD RESET EVERYTHING

...TRUTH IS...

GETTING HURT WAS JUST ANOTHER IN A LONG LINE OF FAILURES

THE BOTH OF US HAVE PLENTY OF TIME TO THINK STUFF OVER WHILE WE'RE IN HERE!

BUT I'M SURE THAT GETTING HURT IMPROVED YOUR OUTLOOK ON LIFE JUST A BIT.

YOU MUST'VE BEEN A PRETTY SHALLOW GUY BACK THEN.

EEH, THAT'S A NEW ONE. I CAN'T SAY I FEEL SORRY FOR YOU, BUT I GUESS YOU FELT PRETTY LOUSY FOR YOURSELF, HUH?

WELL, SUFFERING AND FEELING LOST IS ALL PART OF LIVING, ISN'T IT?

YOUNG PEOPLE LIKE ME MAKE YOU LAUGH

WELL, THIS ONE'S A REAL BRAT SO I'VE MADE IT MY DUTY TO LOOK OUT FOR HIM

WHO THE HELL ARE YOU CALLIN' A BRAT WITH A HAIRCUT LIKE AN 8 YEAR-OLD?!

WELL, YOU TWO'VE COZIED UP QUITE A BIT HAVEN'T YA?

GUITAR-IST BRIAN JONES, HAD THIS HAIRCUT

THAT'S THE REAL REASON THE ROLLING STONES

THE STONES ARE ALREADY BROKEN-DOWN OLD MEN AREN'T THEY?

WHAT THE HELL?

ARE YOU SERI-OUS

THIS IS THE MAKOTO-CHAN SIGNA-TURE CUT!!

BRIAN JONES

HAVE A FEW MORE MAN-NERS, WILL YA?!

<TN:HE'S PROB-ABLY B'Z AND

I DIDN'T EVEN HAVE TO THINK ABOUT IT. I KNOW YOUR TYPE LIKE THE BACK OF MY HAND!

HOW'D YOU KNOW I LIKE B'Z?!

AND THAT'S DIFFER-ENT FROM LIKING B'Z? HOW?

<TN:>POPULAR JAPANESE ROCK DUO. ALSO MIDDLE AGED

SORRY TO BOTHER YOU-- BUT IT'S TIME FOR YOUR TEMP--
AH- OKAY
IS THAT YOU AGAIN, KOYAMA-SAN? YOU'RE IN HERE AN AWFUL LOT THESE DAYS AREN'T YOU?
UHH... YEAH...
HURRY
CONTACT THE FAMILY
THIS PARTICULAR NIGHT
THE OLDER WOMAN I BUMPED INTO IN THE WARD WAS TRANSFERRED TO THE INTENSIVE CARE UNIT
WHAT'S WRONG WITH HER? SHE GONNA BE OKAY?
DUN NO
LOOKS LIKE HER FAMILY STILL HASN'T COME NOT THAT I EXPECTED THEM TO
THERE'S SO MUCH TRUST AND EXPECTATION INHERENT IN THAT, ISNT THERE?
YOU NEED YOUR FAMILY NEAR YOU.
YOU'RE SO STRICT ABOUT EVERYTHING

HEY

SOMEHOW THAT NEED SEEMED VERY LONG

I WAS ASLEEP THROUGH MOST OF IT

BUT EARLY THE NEXT MORNING

THE MEN IN BLACK ARE HERE

MEN? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

UWA AA

...THANK YOU...

YES. I'VE MADE ARRANGE-MENTS WITH THE FUNERAL HALL BUT...

IT RAINED LAST NIGHT, SO YOU CAN SMELL THE EARTH

IT TURNED OUT THAT THAT OLD WOMAN HAD DIED... AND THAT HER FAMILY HADN'T REALLY GIVEN UP ON HER AFTER ALL

OH...

THEY'RE THINKING OF PUTTING ME BACK ON SOMETHING TO REGULATE MY LIVER FUNCTION

BESIDES BLOODWORK AND A MED-DRIP...

HAVE ANY PLANS TOMORROW?

I CAME TO THE LIBRARY HERE AND READ EVERY BOOK, ONE AFTER THE OTHER, READING AND LEARNING EVERYTHING I COULD ABOUT THE WORLD

WHEN I FOUND OUT THAT I WAS SICK, I WANTED TO GROW UP RIGHT AWAY

KURO

BUT IT WAS NO USE

I CAME TO REALIZE

THAT WHEN MOST PEOPLE ARE BORN, THEY PROBABLY DON'T EVEN REALIZE THE BEST PARTS OF THEIR LIFE UNTIL THEY'RE GONE

FOR SOME REASON THAT DAY

TO WATCH THE LIGHTS AS THEY FLOATED DOWN THE RIVER

MY SISTER, STILL ALIVE, AND MY ENTIRE FAMILY HAD GONE TO VISIT MY FATHER'S HOMETOWN

I REMEMBERED THE BEAUTY OF A FARAWAY VILLAGE AT NIGHT

Birthday END

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